



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**November 26, 2008
For immediate release**

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MECHANICAL FAILURE LEADS TO STORM LAKE INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER DISCHARGE

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STORM LAKE — A small amount of untreated industrial wastewater reached Storm Lake early Wednesday morning following a mechanical failure at the Tyson Fresh Meats plant.

At about 1:20 a.m., a call notified Storm Lake police of water running down Vilas Road and into a storm sewer. An investigation determined the water was industrial wastewater (but not sewage) from the Tyson plant.

Tyson shut down plant operations at about 2:30 a.m. to stop the flow of wastewater, and found that an air relief valve on its force wastewater main had failed.

A retention pond receives storm water from the city's storm sewer system in a portion of the city, including the Tyson plant area, before discharging to the lake. The city plugged the discharge from this storm water retention pond at 2:30 a.m. to prevent any additional wastewater from reaching Storm Lake.

"Both Tyson and the city responded immediately to the discharge, and by working together, they prevented the vast majority of this wastewater from reaching Storm Lake," said Julie Sievers, a DNR environmental specialist in Storm Lake.

While Tyson has temporarily removed the air relief valve so the force main is functional, plant operations remain shut down until Wednesday afternoon while Tyson conducts plant cleanup.

Tyson is also working with the city Wednesday morning to pump about 25,000 gallons of water out of the retention pond and storm sewer line. The city will also flush the storm sewer system to ensure all of the wastewater is out of the system. The water will be placed into the city's sanitary sewer system for treatment. Storm sewers carry water directly to a lake, stream or river without treatment.

It is unknown exactly how much wastewater reached the lake.

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CHRISTIANSSEN LEAVES LASTING MARK ON IOWA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

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DES MOINES – After nearly six years – and more than 100,000 miles – as Deputy Director of the Department of Natural Resources, Liz Christiansen has left a lasting mark on conservation efforts in Iowa.

Christiansen has accepted a new position at the University of Iowa as Director of the Office of Sustainability. She starts that post on Dec. 8.

Among her many accomplishments at DNR, Christiansen achieved her goal of visiting each of Iowa's 84 state parks and has been to every county in Iowa during her tenure.

"I always believed that it was important for me to visit with all staff and to fully understand their perspective in making the important decisions that affect the natural resources in Iowa," Christiansen said.

During her time at DNR, Christiansen was a national leader in establishing continuous process improvement, a concept utilized often in private business, but a relatively new application to government. Under her leadership, the agency became the first in the United States to undertake and sustain a Lean effort. Commonly used in manufacturing, Lean is a system for companies and other organizations to continuously analyze their operations and trim any unnecessary processes and waste.

An avid bird watching enthusiast, Christiansen was also a tireless advocate of Iowa's nongame wildlife management efforts, particularly threatened and endangered species and its system of more than 90 natural and cultural preserves.

As deputy director, Christiansen assumed the role of “chief operating officer” of the department, overseeing much of the day-to-day operations of an agency with 1,100 employees and an annual operating budget of more than \$100 million.

Since April, Christiansen also served as project manager for Iowa’s \$60 million first-ever resort park at Honey Creek on Lake Rathbun which opened this fall. In addition to offering a full-slate of resort oriented amenities, it is the first State Park to embody environmental performance in its design and operation. The lodge at Honey Creek was designed and built to standards set forth in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, and the 18-hole golf course is operating according to Audubon certification standards.

Prior to becoming deputy director in 2002, Christiansen worked as an administrator for the IDNR's Land Quality and Waste Management Assistant Division from 2000-2002. From 1998 to 2000 she was grants manager for Linn County. And from 1994 to 1998 she was the recycling/education coordinator with Bluestem Solid Waste Agency in Linn County.

DNR Director Richard Leopold said Christiansen’s leaving is bittersweet.

“We will miss Liz, all of her many talents and vast experience and knowledge, but we are happy for her opportunity to live closer to family in Iowa City and to continue her impressive environmental career,” said Leopold.

“I personally and professionally have benefitted from my working with Liz, she is a passionate and professional leader who I have come to rely on. We wish her the very best,” Leopold added.

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SEWAGE LEAK NEAR DUNDEE REPAIRED

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DUNDEE – A sewage leak from the city of Dundee discovered earlier this month in Delaware County has been repaired, according to the Dundee City Council.

The leak into the Maquoketa River occurred where a main pipeline for the sewage system crosses the river. The damage may have occurred during the flooding last spring and summer.